

ARTICLE ALERT

August 2009

The American Center's Baldwin Library is pleased to offer you **ARTICLE ALERT**, a monthly current affairs publication. It is designed to keep library users abreast of issues and concerns in the United States.

Full texts of all listed articles are available upon request at The American Center's Baldwin Library. Please contact us at Tel. 95-1-223106 or 95-1-223140; or email rangoonirc@state.gov

Library provides three articles free of charge.

SPOTLIGHT: The United States and Asia

1. "Asia's Rise"

[Minxin Pei](#). *Foreign Policy*, July/August 2009, 5 pages.

According to the author, sustained and rapid economic growth in Asia since World War II has undeniably boosted the region's economic output and military capabilities. Is Asia's rise unstoppable? Will Asia lead the world in innovation? Is the power shifting from West to East? The author discusses the decline of America and the dawn of a new Asian age.

DEFENSE STRATEGY

2. "Crafting Strategy in an Age of Transition"

[Shawn Brimley](#). *Parameters*, Winter 2008-09, 16 pages.

Rising regional powers, energy scarcity, climate change, and failing states are some of the myriad of variables that will combine to form a daunting set of strategic challenges for the Obama Administration. The author examines this troubling strategic inheritance and the changing geopolitical context, and proposes a defense strategy that can best protect core American interests in an age of transition.

3. "The Global War on Terror: A Narrative in Need of a Rewrite"

[Amy Zalman](#) and [Jonathan Clarke](#). *Ethics & International Affairs*, Summer 2009, 15 pages.

The authors discuss how the global war on terror was constructed and how it has set down deep institutional roots both in government and popular culture today. A look at those who weave this narrative into the nation's identity by assigning it an iconographic status on par with the national myths of manifest destiny and the frontier nation are also provided.

ASIAN ECONOMY

4. "Pacific Asia and the Asia Pacific: The Choices for APEC"

[C. Fred Bergsten](#). *Policy Brief 09-16*, July 2009, 5 pages.

The author assesses the record of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) over the 20 years of its existence and discusses the global environment in which APEC is likely to be operating over the next 20 years. The brief focuses on the major change in global institutional arrangements implied by the replacement of the "Group of Seven/Eight" (G-7/8) by the "Group of Twenty" (G-20) as the chief steering committee for the global economy. The increasingly central role of an informal and de facto "Group of Two" (G-2) between China and the United States is also examined.

GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS

5. "Globalization in Retreat"

[Roger C. Altman](#). *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2009, 6 pages.

The author examines declines in global trade, capital flows, and immigration, focusing on the lasting effects of the global economic crisis of 2008 and 2009, and geopolitical changes connected with the economic crisis. The effect of the worldwide recession on developing countries, with particular focus given to the declining levels of investment, financing, and commodity prices is also explored.

6. "Surviving the Slump: A Special Report on Business in America"

[Robert Guest](#), et al. *The Economist*, May 30, 2009, 13 pages.

In this special report, several renowned journalists offer their insight on the U.S. economic conditions during the recession, the effect of personal finance, and the challenges associated with the regulation of new businesses in the United States.

The potential role of companies outside of the financial services industry in new business development that will accompany economic recovery in the United States is also discussed.

7. "The Financial Markets and Fear Itself"

[Holman W. Jenkins Jr.](#) *Policy Review*, June/July 2009, 11 pages.

The author examines the U.S. subprime mortgage lending phenomenon, focusing on the interconnectedness of national economics and global political culture. Why risk models and assumptions could have never accurately predicted the drop in home prices is deftly explained and a look at how risk is an inherent element of the market economy is provided.

8. "The Science of Economic Bubbles and Busts"

[Gary Stix](#). *Scientific American*, July 2009, 8 pages.

The author discusses the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression has prompted a reassessment of how financial markets work and how people make decisions about money. The worldwide financial meltdown has caused a new examination of why markets sometimes become overheated and then come crashing down. The dot-com blowup and the subsequent housing and credit crises highlight how psychological quirks sometimes trump rationality in investment decision making.

DEMOCRACY PROMOTION

9. "Revitalizing U.S. Democracy Promotion: A Comprehensive Plan for Reform"

[Michael A. Cohen](#) and [Maria Figueroa Küpçü](#). *New America Foundation*, April 2009, 24 pages.

The authors examine the challenges facing America's democratization agenda, pointing to the need to create a new division of labor in the foreign assistance bureaucracy. Six steps for revitalizing U.S. democracy promotion efforts and reforming the U.S. foreign assistance bureaucracy are laid out.

10. "Reflections on Information Technology and Democracy"

[Joshua Cohen](#). *Boston Review*, March/April 2009, 3 pages.

While elections and other institutions of accountability are essential to democracy, their efficacy arguably depends on a complicated, dispersed, ongoing, relatively unstructured public discussion. How does the Internet shape this informal process of discussion–public discourse? The author examines the way in which the Internet is changing democratic discourse and the impact of information technology on the society.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS

11. "Hillary's Challenge"

[Michelle Goldberg](#). *The American Prospect*, July/August 2009, 4 pages.

Promoting women's rights internationally requires an extraordinary balance of strength and delicacy. The author examines the challenges facing Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in her attempt to advance women's rights in the foreign policy arena. Thoughts on what Secretary Clinton should do to overcome the real obstacles, particularly with a State Department culture that is not accustomed to paying much attention to women's rights, is explored.

DIPLOMATIC STRATEGY

12. "Charm Offensive"

[Dayo Olopade](#). *The American Prospect*, July/August 2009, 4 pages.

The author examines the diplomatic strategy of the Obama administration in managing the expectations of his political base. Some of the proposed initiatives are explored, including changing the name of the Office of Public Liaison to the Office of Public Engagement, staying connected with supporters outside Washington, and holding of summits to discuss various issues.

GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND ENVIRONMENT

13. "Moving Heaven and Earth"

[Graeme Wood](#). *The Atlantic*, July/August 2009, 5 pages.

The author examines efforts by scientists to reengineer the climate in order to combat the effects of global warming, focusing on proposed ideas that are both inexpensive and technologically plausible and some of which are so cheap that a rich and committed environmentalist could act on them tomorrow.

14. "Discounting the Future"

[Indur M. Goklany](#). *Regulation*, Spring 2009, 5 pages.

Would future generations be worse off than we are today if climate change is allowed to occur? The author attempts to answer this threshold question by comparing current and future welfare per capita after accounting for the costs of climate change.

15. "Plastic. Fantastic?"

[Jennifer Kahn](#). *Mother Jones*, May/June 2009, 3 pages.

The near infinite proliferation of plastics initially seemed like a boon. Compared with wood or metal, plastic was seen as an infinite material. Can plastic evolve into something worth keeping? The author examines the environmental aspects of plastics and the challenges to creating a plastic that is nontoxic, biodegradable, and recyclable.

GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

16. "Projecting Population"

[Elizabeth Leahy](#) and [Sean Peoples](#). *World Watch*, May/June 2009, 7 pages.

Why do population projections remain an important tool for policymakers and planners? Why do they provide a much clearer projection than in other social sciences? The authors explore a variety of demographics, as well as data sources and methodologies to gain a deeper understanding of uncertainties around population projections.

17. "Gates, Google, and the End of Global Poverty"

[Michael Edwards](#). *The Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Spring/Summer 2009, 8 pages.

With Bill Gates as its foremost promoter, "philanthrocapitalism" has entered the international development realm with a bang. The author identifies two distinguishing features of philanthrocapitalism that cross different interests and interpretations of the term and examines the difficulty of linking some philanthrocapitalism successes to the social and political institutions that underpin national development.

18. "HABITAT SAVED"

[Roger Di Silvestro](#). *National Wildlife*, vol. 47, no. 5, August-September 2009, 6 pages.

The author describes how a non-governmental organization and the publisher of this magazine, the National Wildlife Federation, has successfully challenged environmentally destructive government policies in court.

MEDIA AND JOURNALISM

19. "Last Stand"

[Michael Hirschorn](#). *The Atlantic*, July/August 2009, 3 pages.

With the emergence of easily accessible news online and via cable television, news magazines are being severely challenged. The author take a look at the success of the periodical "The Economist," while comparing it to other formerly popular periodicals, such as "Newsweek" and "Time" magazine, which are faltering and forced to experiment with new business models.

20. "The Twitter Explosion"

[Paul Farhi](#). *American Journalism Review*, June/July 2009, 6 pages.

Twitter, a micro-blogging tool on which users share text messages of 140 characters or less, has become useful to mass media news organizations as a means of responding to breaking news, as communication can be instantaneous with a large number of sources. The author discusses the use of the online social network Twitter in today's world of journalism.

21. "EXPENSIVE GIFTS"

[Alissa Quart](#). *Columbia Journalism Review*, vol. 48, no. 2, July/August 2009, pages.

The author examines the ethics and importance of money and attribution in the emerging dispensation of the "gift economy." Shepard Fairey, famous for his red and blue Obama silkscreen "Hope," is a proponent of "free culture," a stance that advocates open sharing of intellectual property. This "economy of giving" is a hallmark of the new digital reality. However, the Associated Press (AP) and the photographer who shot the photo Fairey appropriated for his art claim copyright, and the AP sued the artist for copyright infringement.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

22. "THE MONSTER FOOTPRINT OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY"

[Kris De Kecker](#), *Low-Tech Magazine*, June 16, 2009, 15 pages.

The author notes that, for most of the modern industrial era, durable equipment such as cars, refrigerators or washing machines consumed more energy over their lifetime of use and operation than during their manufacture. The advent of computer technology has turned this situation upside down -- vastly more energy is required in the manufacture of computers and other electronic gadgets than they consume

TRENDS IN DIGITAL LIBRARY

23. "Exploiting Synergies"

[Terence K. Huwe](#). *Online*, March/April 2009, 6 pages.

The author explores the experiences of the University of California, Berkeley's Institute for Research on Labor and Employment Library (IRLE) in digital repository building, then discusses various issues concerning digital repositories and online information resources.

24. "Taking Your Library on the Road"

[Lorette S.J. Weldon](#). *Computers in Libraries*, May 2009, 4 pages.

The author discusses the use of an electronic library assistant using free Google modules that will allow for 24-hour availability of library collections, as well as the ability to conduct online sharing and discussions at specific time periods.

EDUCATION

25. "Speak Easy"

[Barbara Hoffert](#). *Library Journal*, July 2009, 4 pages.

How can we use technology to help teach second languages to people and how can libraries be more involved? The author explains how one learns to speak a language, while also looking at tools that can be used by libraries to assist people in learning a second language.

26. "Learning Across Distance"

[Kristina Cowan](#). *The Education Digest*, May 2009, 5 pages.

Virtual-instruction programs are growing rapidly, but the impact on "brick-and-mortar" classrooms is still up in the air. The author, a researcher at Sloan Work and Family Research Network at Boston College, discusses the expansion of virtual education programs, increases in online enrollment, the effectiveness of online classes, and the relationship of online learning and individualized instruction.

27. "The Principal in the Teaching and Learning Process"

[Marlow Ediger](#). *Education*, Summer 2009, 5 pages.

The author, a renowned education expert, examines the role of the school principal

in teaching and learning, particularly in relation to the development and improvement of school curricula. Grouping students, selection of learning activities, and integration of technology into the curriculum are also discussed.

RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

28. "Religious Pluralism: Civil Society's Hope in a Diverse Country"

[Eboo Patel](#) and [Becca Hartman](#). *National Civic Review*, Spring 2009, 6 pages.

The authors present their insights into the American dream and religious diversity in United States. The implication of the Immigration Act of 1965 to religious diversity in the United States and the achievement of religious pluralism is also examined.